



The Administration on Aging

The Older Americans Act of 1965 established a range of programs that provide services and opportunities for older Americans, particularly those at risk of losing their independence. The Act also established the Administration on Aging (AoA), headed by an Assistant Secretary for Aging appointed by the President.

The Administration on Aging administers a number of programs at the federal level, which help a diverse and growing number of vulnerable older persons maintain their independence and remain in their own homes for as long as possible. Some of the programs offer opportunities for older Americans to improve their health. Others offer the opportunity to actively participate in the lives of their families, communities, and country through volunteer and employment programs.

AoA is the official federal agency dedicated to policy and program development, planning, and the delivery of supportive home and community-based services to older persons and their caregivers. Through information, referral, and outreach efforts at the community level, AoA seeks to educate older people and their caregivers about the benefits and services available to help them and the critical steps for living longer, healthier, and better-quality lives.

AoA's Partners

AoA works in partnership with its nationwide network of 57 State Units on Aging, 655 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), 225 federally recognized tribal organizations and two Native Hawaiian tribes and thousands of service providers. These organizations plan, coordinate, and develop community-level systems of services that meet the unique needs of individual older persons and their caregivers. The AoA collaborates with federal agencies, the Congress, national aging organizations, the business community and the media to ensure that, whenever possible, their programs and resources are targeted to older persons most in need and are closely coordinated with those in the aging network.

Older Americans Act Programs

Through the Older Americans Act, AoA provides funding to state and area agencies on aging and tribal organizations to support a variety of activities. These include congregate and home - delivered meals and supportive services such as in-home and community-based services, which provide; for example:

- nutrition;
- transportation;
- health promotion;
- nursing home ombudsmen services; and
- outreach and elder abuse prevention efforts.

The National Family Caregiver Support Program is a new Older Americans Act program established in 2000, which will for the first time, provide a variety of essential support services such as information, counseling, respite care, and adult day care for family caregivers of chronically ill older persons or those with disabilities.

Native Americans

Native Americans are among the most disadvantaged groups in the country. AoA's Office for American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian Programs awards training and technical assistance grants to provide for much needed, culturally appropriate services for 225 American Indian and Alaska Native tribal organizations and two nonprofit organizations serving Native Hawaiians.



Protecting the Rights of Vulnerable Older Persons

Empowering older persons and their family members is a critical component of AoA's consumer information and protection role. AoA-funded programs link people to available services, protect the rights of the vulnerable and at-risk, offer education about ways to detect and prevent elder abuse and consumer fraud, and provide opportunities for older persons to enhance their health. Included among these services are:

- **Pension Counseling Programs** that help older Americans access their pensions and make informed insurance and health care choices.
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs** that serve to investigate and resolve complaints made by or for residents of nursing, board and care, and similar adult care homes. AoA supports the training of thousands of paid and volunteer long-term care ombudsmen, insurance counselors, and other professionals who assist with reporting waste, fraud, and abuse in nursing homes and other settings.
- **Operation Restore Trust (ORT)** that uses innovative, proactive partnerships across the federal, state, and community levels to identify and report health care waste, fraud and abuse. AoA's local ORT programs recruit and train retired professionals to combat and prevent this serious national problem.
- **The Eldercare Locator** that provides a national toll-free service (1-800-677-1116) to help callers find necessary, convenient services and resources in their own communities or throughout the country.

AoA also provides older persons with funds for disaster assistance. In fiscal year 2000, grants were awarded to 16 states totaling \$623,240 to assist in helping older persons cope with disasters such as forest fires, floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes.

The National Aging Information Center, a service of AoA, maintains a bibliographic database about older adults that cites and abstracts aging related materials. The database includes research summaries, unpublished materials, software, and policy reports (<http://www.aoa.gov/naic>). AoA's website (<http://www.aoa.gov>) provides information for and about older persons, their families, and professionals involved in aging programs and services.

Working in close partnership with its sister agencies in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the AoA is the official Federal agency dedicated to policy development, planning and the delivery of supportive home and community-based services to older persons and their caregivers. The AoA works through the national aging network of 57 State Units on Aging, 655 Area Agencies on Aging, 225 Tribal and Native organizations representing 300 American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal organizations, and two organizations serving Native Hawaiians, plus thousands of service providers, adult care centers, caregivers, and volunteers. For more information about the AoA, please contact:

U.S. Administration on Aging
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

Phone: (202) 619-0724
Fax: (202) 260-1012
Email: aoainfo@aoa.gov
Web: www.aoa.gov

Eldercare Locator: 1-800-677-1116, Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET